Use of Scientific; Tecbnologjr for Benefit of Tribal Children

*275. SHRI JAGIR, SINGH
DARD:
DR. SHKIKANT RAM-
CHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will' the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the various measures which the Department of Science and Technology can take in the area of Mel-ghat Forest of Amravati distrifct of Maharashtra where 4500 children have died due to mialnutrition and disease during the last three years and several are likely to die in this-rainy season;

(b) in whiat way can modem science and technology come to the benefit of these tribals; and

(c) what concrete steps will be taken by this department for preventing this great calamity?

THE MINISTEROF STATE IN [THE laiNISTRY OF SCIENCE & TECIHINOLOGY THE MINISlIER pF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH): da) to (c) The livelihood of the tribals of Meighat forest re gion now largely depends on agri culture. One of the reasons of loss in the agriculture prodtiction is the absence of scientific water mianage-tnent practices. Therefore, an expert group of the Department of Science & technology has recommended a project titled "Developing livelihood base for tribals in Melghiat through watershed development" for imple mentation in this area. The actSvi-vitles under this project include di version drains, field bunding and doinage; contour trenches, planata-tion. gully plugging, organisation of local community and people's partici pation and *in situ* moisture conserva tion-

Grant of Industry status to news papets

*276. SHRI S. MUTHU MANI: Will the Minista: of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Language Newspapers Associjation has urged Government to ,give the status of industry to newspapers;

(b) if so, the action taken by Government to grant the said status to the said orgianisations; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to implement the recomenda-tions of the Ram Mohan Raio Com-mi'ttee?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) Ministry of Industry has not receiv-ed any such representjation.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) 11 out of 12 recommendations of the Committee have been accept-eid by the Govemmat. It has not: been pwssible, however, to extend a special concessibnal iiate of postal tariff.

MOU signed by Departinent of Public Enterprises with an Enterprise

*277. DR, B. B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an MOU is signed every year between Department of Publie Enterprises and an Enterprise;

(b) if so, the details Of the sets and achieved during 1996-97 particularly in power, oil sector and steel sector;

(c) whether the Goevmment have set up any cOrtimittee to review the functioning of MOU system:L:

(d) if so, the main finding of the said report; and

(e) the overnment eactions thereto?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI IMURASOLl MARAN): (a) No Sir.

(b) Question dtaes not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Questiion do not arise.

Industrial ddkness in tlie country

*278. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are awiare that industriial sickness has been a matter of serious concern for the country for over last two decades;

(c) effective measures being taken or proposed to be taken by Government tc tackle the problem of industrial, sickness?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) Data on sick industrial units assisted by banks in the country is compiled by the Reserve Bank of India. According to the latest available report as at the end of March, 1996, the position of industrial sickness in the country and the outstanding bank credit is as follows:

(Rs. in crores)

Category		No. of units	Outstanding Ban Credit
1.	SSI Sick .	262376	3721.94
2.	Non-SSI Sick .	1956	8823.19
3.	Non-SSI Weak .	418	1203.12
	TOTAL :	2,64,750	13,748.25

The industry-wise position of sickness indicates that industrial units in textiles, tngineftring, chtoicalsv iron& steel, paper and electrical sectors are the ones most affected.

A number of causes, both internal and external, often operating in combination, are responsible for industrial sickness. Main causes include deficiencies in planning, management, marketing, technology, etc.

(c) Government has taken a number of steps to tackle the problem of industrial-sickness which, inter alia, include, guidelines of Reserve Bank of India to banks, amalgamation of sick units with healthy units, setting up of Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction under Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, National Renewal Fund, National Equity Fund, etc.

Higli cost of packaspuig in India

*279. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI RAIUBHAI A. PARMAR:

Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that food processing and other agro based industry